

STROKE PRACTICE

Practice writing these strokes with your dip pen:

STROKE REFERENCE SHEET

These graphics will help you understand exactly how letters are formed with directional arrows and an indication of where the starting point is. Reference this sheet whenever you're in doubt.

STEP TWO MASTERING DIP PEN CALLIGRAPHY IN THE FLOURISH FORMAL STYLE

Now that you've mastered faux calligraphy, it's time to experiment with the Flourish Formal Style. I find it easiest to practice on 80-90 lb. drawing paper (found in hobby/art supply general stores with an art department) with waterproof India ink. I personally prefer a dip pen to create the Flourish Formal Style because it gives me a nice writing angle, and it's also easily achieved using a straight holder — great news for both lefties and righties! I would recommend a Nikko G nib for beginners, and a Brause Extra Fine nib for more advanced levels. Before beginning, it's important to understand how to make thick downstrokes, so let's touch on that a bit.

EN CALLIGRAPHY STROKES

STEP ONE MASTERING FAUX CALLIGRAPHY IN THE FLOURISH FORMAL STYLE

It is important to master "faux calligraphy" — calligraphy with a regular ballpoint or gel point pen — before you attempt it with a dip pen. When you're learning this style with a regular pen, you don't have to concern yourself with putting pressure on or off the nib, ink spatter, or any of the extra things to think about when using a dip pen. You're simply familiarizing yourself with the letter forms and learning how to create them so they look natural and effortless, both when you create them using faux calligraphy and regular calligraphy.

Learning faux calligraphy in the Flourish Formal Style isn't just a segue into learning dip pen calligraphy. There will be times when you need to use calligraphy on surfaces that aren't conducive to calligraphy, for example, chalkboards, rocks or sand dollars (people have been using these as place cards), wood, and anything else that's not smooth paper. Mastery of faux calligraphy will allow you to be very versatile in creating this style on any surface.

You may practice your faux calligraphy on any paper you wish, though I have found regular printer paper to be quite sufficient. Shall we begin?

FAUX CALLIGRAPHY LETTERS

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
 N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
 a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 ? ! " ' , . : ; & # \$ % &

STROKE IDENTIFICATION CHEAT SHEET